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A MODERN SYMPOSIUM. By G. Lowes Dickinson. London: Brinley, Johnson & Ince, Ltd., 1905. Pp. 100.

This book purports to be the report of a meeting of a club, called The Seekers. Its object and method are indicated in the following words spoken by the chairman: "I propose that Cantilupe should make a personal confession; that he should tell us why he has been a politician, why he has been, and is, a tory, and why he is now retiring in the prime of life. I propose, in a word, that he should give us his point of view. That will certainly provoke Remenham, on whom I shall call next. He will provoke someone else. And so we shall all find ourselves giving our points of view." There are many speakers. They include a tory, a liberal, a conservative, a socialist, an anarchist, a professor, a man of science, a journalist, a man of business, a poet, a gentleman of leisure, a member of the Society of Friends, and a man of letters. The book has a genuinely literary character and is entertaining in the best sense. The dramatic setting increases the interest; but there is a lack of spontaneity in the arranging of the speakers which mars the artistic effect; the chairman is too much in evidence.

DAVID PHILLIPS.

RADYR, CARDIFF.

A HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION. By Thomas M. Lindsay, M. A., D. D., Principal, The United Free Church College, Glasgow. In two volumes. *Vol. I, THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY*, from its beginning to the religious peace of Augsburg. International Theological Library. Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1906.

Adequately to treat the History of the Reformation requires a combination of qualities. There is needed not only the patient investigation of the historian into a mass of documentary evidence, consisting largely of little known local and municipal records, whose relative value only wide experience can appraise, but the judgment of the sociologist and the theological acumen which can present with lucid fairness, the true differences between Luther and Rome on the one hand, and Zwingli and Calvin on the other. Professor Lindsay's smaller works—his Monographs on the Reformation and his article on Luther in the Cambridge Modern History, to say nothing of occasional essays on the early schoolmen,

have given us the right to expect these qualities from him. He has brought out the full significance of the movement with which he deals by treating it, as it must be treated, in its social environment, complicated as it was by the political and economic conditions of the time, as the gradual outcome of a slow, unconscious process.

The new vision of the real world had led to that new vision of the world of spirit on which the ends of the ages were met. Italy and Germany were near, the parts of one Empire, and the Renaissance and the Reformation are but the different racial expressions of a joyous spirit of discovery which made the world new. The Renaissance, aristocratic, like all artistic movements, was incomplete; an emancipation of the reason which grafted Christianity upon Aristotle produced neither sound theology nor sound scholarship. Professor Lindsay brings out with admirable clearness that the Reformation, which set the judgment free in matters of religion also, was the fruit of continuous growth, had its roots fixed deep in the past; that Luther only articulated the views long held by silent individuals, and already voiced by one courageous member, Marsilius of Padua, when he proclaimed the priesthood of believers. The ideas of Wyclif and of Huss were at work beneath the simple piety of the ordinary German man. Germany was deeply religious. It was regarded even so late as the beginning of the sixteenth century as the most secure and fruitful source of papal revenue. No country spent so much on indulgences and pilgrimages, or supported so many churches and religious houses. The hunger for sermons foreshadowed the modern zeal for lectures. This piety, which spread religious education far and wide, was in many cases, as Professor Lindsay shows, of a non-ecclesiastical kind. Many shared the opinion of Luther's father, that the clergy both secular and regular were rogues or fools. Reforms which the Curia neglected, though advised by the Councils of Constance and Basle, were in Saxony, Brandenburg, and Mansfield carried out by the secular authority. Begging, of which the church approved, was suppressed by municipal by-law. There were numerous semi-mystical praying circles and brotherhoods. Prayer meetings were held, and the Bible read in the vernacular by the Kalandsgilden or Friendly Societies of Artisans. The Brethren of the Common Lot founded Schools and employed education to raise "Spiritual pillars in the temple of the Lord:" and what they taught bore a great resemblance to Lutheranism in many respects. These societies were regarded with suspicion, but their influence was

great. The Universities were wholly scholastic until the persecution of Reuchlin rallied the Humanists to coöperate in the new movement. The peasantry had a powerful stimulus to unrest in their economic grievances. Since the time of Huss, there had been constant social risings. Primarily revolts of the poor against the rich, they acquired religious significance from the fact that their animus was more and more directed against the wealthy clergy. As early as 1476, Hans Böhm, a visionary who could not even say the creed, had propounded a religious socialism which spread far and wide, and was revived in the Bundschuh revolts, recurring at short intervals between 1493 and 1572. A series of bad harvests aggravated the misery of the peasantry.

No part of Professor Lindsay's book is more interesting and valuable than this. His description of the career of Luther is, of course, accurate, and his elucidation of the religious position admirable, but here he perhaps hardly gives a full impression of the force of that extraordinarily human personality whose sanity and vigor enabled him to control a tremendous moral crisis. The discussion of Indulgences is excellent. The theory of "thesaurus meritorum," the doctrine of attrition, and the sacrament of penance could not be more lucidly set forth. It is very important to make clear, as Dr. Lindsay does, that what Luther had to deal with, what he had in his mind, was not so much the theological doctrine as the common practice with regard to indulgences: and certainly it was difficult to view the practical expression of that doctrine in any other way. Practically the purchaser of an indulgence believed that it remitted not his penalty only, but his guilt. "God desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should pray and live."

The central point was, as Professor Lindsay insists, that the Bible was not a doctrinal, but a personal revelation: the meaning of Christianity Luther found in the faith that throws itself upon God. From such a faith the priesthood of believers followed naturally. Faith incorporates Christ, the personal Godhead, with the believer: the believer who has faith is regenerate and finds his assurance of salvation not in the imperfect works he therefore can do but in the perfect mediatorial work of Christ which, through faith, he can appropriate. As a summary of the sources, manner and result of the Reformation, at once succinct and adequate, this work is quite first rate. For the thrill of the great movement indeed, the magnetic apprehension of

sovereign personality, for the inner history of Luther, Erasmus, Charles V, etc., we must look elsewhere. To give this was not Dr. Lindsay's design; his is the dry light of reason, but from the basis of his exposition, we may proceed to it. We look forward with great interest to his second volume, which deals with the lesser movement connected with the Reformation, and with the counter Reformation.

M. A. HAMILTON.

LONDON.

ETHIK. Von Max Wentscher. Theil I: KRITISCHE GRUNDLIGUNG, 1902. Theil II: SYSTEM DER ETHIK, 1905. Leipzig: J. A. Barth. Pp. xii, 368; xii, 396.

To Professor Wentscher the first and last word of ethics is personality—

“Höchstes Glück der Erderkinder  
Ist nur die Persönlichkeit.”

and the essence of personality is free will. The task of ethics is to exhibit the aims and ideals of “a possible willing”—to set up, as it were, “a kingdom of possible willing.” The question “What can we will,” is thus declared to be the primary and central problem of any ethics, and the idea of Freedom is made the highest principle of morality.

The spiritual affinities of such an ethics are to be found in Kant and in Nietzsche, but Professor Wentscher deserves the credit of a thorough-going attempt to derive not only the soul but the body of ethics from the principle of “the ideal of a free will.” In the first part, the idea of “die Bethätigung freien Wollens in immerhöherer, vollendeterer Ausprägung” as the original essence of morality is justified against other points of view by an examination of the problem of conscience and the problem of freedom. The author formulates the whole duty of man in two ethical axioms:

1. Strebe nach höchster Ausprägung wahrhaft eigenen Wesens und fester Grundsätze einer vollendet eigenen, freien Wollens.
2. Mache von dieser Fähigkeit freier Bethätigung eigenen Wesens den kraftsvollsten und umfassendsten Gebrauch.

In the second part (which has appeared after an interval of three years) these results are applied to the actual content and detail of the ethical life. What the author attempts in effect is to